



Policy for Use of Library Rooms (Community Room, Meeting Room and Study Rooms)

Otis Library has four (4) meeting spaces available for public use. The **Community Room**, located on the second floor, has a maximum capacity of 128; the adjacent **Meeting Room** seats 18 comfortably around an extended conference table. Two (2) **Study Rooms**, located in the first floor adult stacks, are also available. These have a maximum capacity of six (6) in each room.

These rooms are available to nonprofit organizations and community groups for programs that are cultural, educational, recreational or civic in nature. Use of the rooms does not constitute sponsorship or endorsement of the user or user's beliefs by Otis Library or its Board of Trustees.

I Priorities

In cases where more than one group requests the same meeting space, priority is given as follows:

- a. Library-sponsored programs
- b. Friends of Otis Library
- c. Library-related programs
- d. Norwich- related programs
- e. All others

II Meeting Room Access

1. Meetings in the Library facilities **must be open to the public** and may not be restricted to the membership of the sponsoring organization.
2. **Groups may not charge admission nor request donations for attendance or participation.** Exception: Fees may be charged for any class or workshop sponsored by the Library.
3. **Rooms are available to groups during hours that the Library is open for general use. (Exception: With prior notification, the Community Room and Meeting Room are available until 9:00 p.m. Monday-Friday.) There is a \$25/hour charge for the extended use of the facility.**
4. Groups using the meeting rooms **must end programs at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the Library's closing time**, or 9:00 p.m. if extended hours were requested.
5. **Organizations must comply with applicable Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements when using library meeting room facilities** and are responsible for providing, and if necessary paying for, qualified interpreters or auxiliary aids upon request to individuals who require certain accommodations that would enable them to observe and/or participate in the meeting. Any person who will require such an

accommodation is requested to notify both the organization and the Library Director during regular business hours at least seven (7) work days prior to the event.

III General Restrictions

1. **Smoking is not permitted. Alcohol is allowed only at events sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library.** Beverages are limited to wine and beer as described below.
2. **Rooms must be left in the condition they were found.** The organization or person reserving the room **is responsible for all damages incurred**, both in the room and in adjacent areas if utilized by the user.
3. Food may be served. The adjacent kitchen area may be used, **but must be left in the condition in which it was found.**
4. To avoid damage to carpets and floors, **only clear liquids, white wine, light colored beers, ginger ale, or water are to be offered as beverages.**
5. Organizations are **encouraged to provide their own A/V equipment.**
6. **Otis Library will make A/V equipment available at a rate of \$25/hour. THE GROUP USING THE ROOM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR EQUIPMENT DAMAGE OR LOSS.**
7. Groups using the facilities must conform to all **fire and safety regulations, including maintaining open aisle space and abiding by occupancy limits.**
8. **Library staff is not available** to change the room arrangement or to provide support services, such as carrying equipment or materials into or around the Library, operating audio-visual equipment and making photocopies.
9. **Adequate supervision of minors is required at all times.**
10. **Activities and materials must be contained within the room**, and they must not interfere with normal Library operations.
11. Groups using the Community Room **are responsible for setting up chairs and tables.** **Maintenance staff will break down equipment following the event.**
12. Furnishings in the **Meeting Room and Study Rooms** cannot be reconfigured.
13. **Otis Library is not responsible** for equipment, supplies, materials or personal possessions owned by those sponsoring or attending a meeting or activity.

IV. Prohibited Uses and Activities

The following events are prohibited:

1. **The sale, promotion, endorsement or advertisement, whether directly or indirectly, of a commercial product or service.**

2. **Instructors conducting classes for profit and groups promoting future courses or services entailing fees.**
3. **Political rallies or partisan events.**
4. **Religious services or evangelical meetings.**
5. **Employee or other recruitment.**
6. **Gambling activities.**
7. **Strictly social functions, defined as an event intended for entertainment through companionship with friends and associates, including but not limited to weddings, anniversaries, showers, card parties, birthday and social club parties.**
8. **Fundraising for any individual or group other than Otis Library or Friends of Otis Library.**

V. Application Process and Reservations

- a. All who wish to use a room must **complete an application**, which is attached to this policy statement.
- b. Applicants must **clearly identify themselves, their organizational affiliation, and the purpose of the meeting.**
- c. The Library Director will have **complete administrative responsibility for approval of applications and scheduling of programs.**
- d. Room reservations may be made up to **six (6) months in advance.**
- e. Applications are approved on a **first-come, first-served basis** on receipt of the completed and signed application.
- f. The Library **will not accept reservations for a series of meetings which would designate the Library as the regular meeting place for any organization. Groups may use a meeting room no more than six (6) times per year.** The Library reserves the right to determine if a particular request for meeting room use constitutes a monopolization that unfairly restricts use by other organizations. Exceptions may be based upon special circumstances and upon availability of the room.
- g. Applicants must provide a **contact name and phone number** that the Library can give to the public for referrals to their organization.
- h. Authorization to use a meeting room is **not transferable to another organization.**
- i. **Notice of cancellation of room use should be given to the Library as soon as possible.** It is the responsibility of those using the room **to notify the public of a change of date, time or cancellation.**

- j. In the event of an emergency closing of the Library, **all reservations are automatically cancelled.** Library staff will attempt to inform the contact person of the closing.

VI. Fee

1. Except as noted, there are no fees to use the meeting rooms. **However, monetary donations for the use of meeting rooms are gratefully accepted.**

VII. Publicity

1. Individuals and organizations reserving use of meeting rooms **are responsible for their own publicity.**
2. **No advertisements, announcements, press releases, flyers, etc., relating to meetings may state that the meeting is sponsored by Otis Library. Copies of the aforementioned must be sent to the Director's Office at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.**
3. **The location of the Library should be publicized, but the Library's telephone number may not be used for any purpose.**
4. The Library is **not to be included as a source for further information.**
5. **The Library will not handle attendee registration or take messages for non-Library sponsored program participants.**
6. **No signs, posters, displays or decorations may be put up in the Library without prior permission from the Director's Office.**

VIII. Non-compliance

1. Individuals or groups which do not abide by this policy or whose programs disrupt Library operations **will no longer be allowed use of meeting rooms.**
2. **The Library Director has full authority to grant, refuse or revoke permission or to set conditions on use of meeting rooms.** All exceptions to policy must be approved by the Library Director.
3. **Police supervision, when deemed necessary by the Director, must be provided and paid for by the organization or individual.**